New path leads to Lozzar’s

Phil Slessar and Loretta Riordan have spent the past three years building their dream cafe at Lozzar’s, which prides itself on great service and great food.

[dropcap style=”font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;”] A [/dropcap]t some point in our lives, most of us reflect on whether what we do for a living makes us happy or if we need to take a deep breath and make a change.

For **Loretta Riordan** and her partner **Phil Slessar**, that point arrived just over three years ago when Loretta, who had a long career in hospitality, decided she no longer wanted to work for other people, but for herself.

Phil, who came from a background in electric motor repairs, was also ready for a new challenge and doing “something completely different”.

“I was moving from a job where you have very dirty hands, to one where they are very, very clean,” he said with a laugh,

extending his fingers for effect.

Together, Loretta and Phil took the plunge and made an offer on a café in Kepler St, Warrnambool that they refurbished and reopened as **Lozzar's Lounge Cafe**.

"I had been working ridiculously hard for other people for many years, but I never had the confidence to think that I could open my own place," Loretta said.

"Finally, I reached the point where I realised that if I didn't make a move, I would never do it and in the end it all happened very quickly."

French toast anyone? Breakfast can be as healthy or as decadent as you like at Lozzar's.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] P [/dropcap]hil learned the art of being a barista and Loretta expanded her cooking skills to the point where she could make virtually all of the café's menu range herself, single-handedly, and only source a few items from other suppliers. Front-of-house was taken care of by the very capable **Bec Scholz**, who just moved on to a new venture last week after

three years at Lozzar's.

The café has established a loyal following for its breakfast and lunch menu which includes sit-down-and-take-your-time items like french toast, homemade muesli, fruit and oat crumble (breakfast), smoked salmon, feta and pea frittata, or a smoked chicken, leek and roast pumpkin risotto (lunch), plus the full range of 'grab-and-go' bagels, focaccias, salads and soups.

The sweeter side of things includes a range of plump muffins (raspberry and white chocolate is the house specialty) and delicious cakes (such as blueberry and lemon sour cream cake) paired with one of a large selection of T2 teas that are served in a pot, or a coffee from the ethically responsible Di Bella roasters.

Resistance is useless…raspberry and white choc muffins, made by

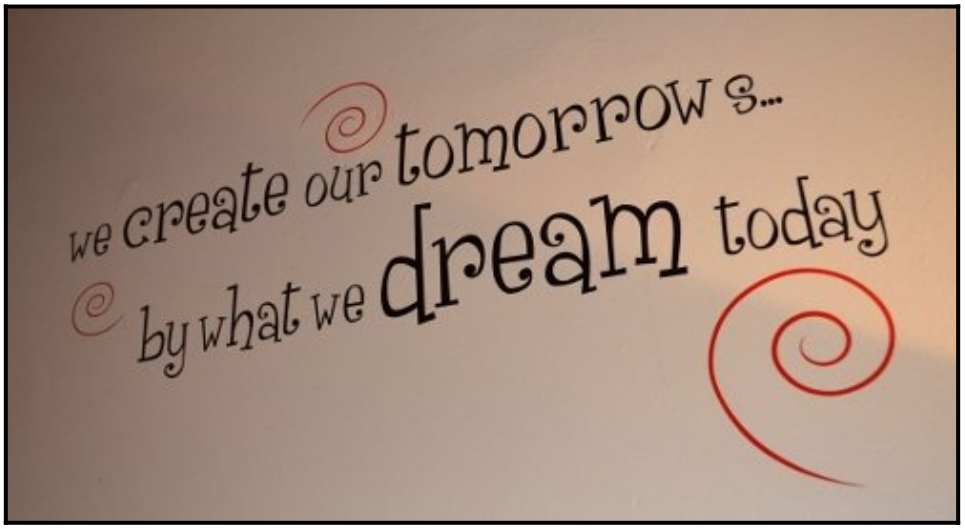
Loretta, are a house specialty.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] W [/dropcap]hen it comes to a successful café, however, great food and coffee are only one part of the equation. Great service is equally as important and this is where Lozzar's steps up.

"I want all of our customers to be noticed, and by that I mean, when they walk in, we say hello, we make sure they feel welcome and comfortable and really looked after," Loretta said.

The Lozzar's philosophy is reflected in the inspirational phrases added around the walls, which customers have been known to photograph.

"These sayings reflect my own thinking because I never thought I would ever have my own cafe. It has been hard work, but when the place is buzzing, when our customers are telling us that the food is great, well, it makes your day. It makes it all worthwhile," Loretta said.



Wall art gives customers something to contemplate while enjoying their coffee…

[box type="bio"] Lozzar's Lounge Cafe, 52a Kepler St, Warrnambool. Open Mon-Fri 8am-5pm, Sat 9am-lunch. Ph:

55612823. Find them on Facebook here. [/box]

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